

Application No. 10/707,526
Docket No. A3-1700
Amendment dated April 18, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 18, 2005

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0015] with the following amended paragraph:

[0015] The cutting unit 12 is represented as comprising a housing 26 on which two horizontal cutting heads (an example of which is shown in Figure 4) can be individually mounted on a sled 28. A mounting station 29 for receiving a cutting head is visible in Figure 1 as an opening in the sled 28. A second mounting station for a second cutting head is not visible in Figure 1 as a result of being positioned beneath the feed tube 14 to perform a cutting operation on products dropping down through the feed tube 14. The cutting heads are mounted on the sled 28 to permit uninterrupted changeover, such as when a head requires replacement or a different cut is required. Moving the sled 28 leftward (as viewed in Figure 1) causes a cutting head positioned on the mounting station ~~the mounting station~~ beneath the feed tube 14 to be displaced leftward, and positions the mounting station 29 visible in Figure 1 beneath the feed tube 14. Various techniques can be used to move the sled 28, including automated and manual techniques known in the art.

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Please replace paragraph [0022] with the following amended paragraph:

[0022] The choice of segment design (segments 16 and 20 versus segment 24) may depend on the type of food products being handled. While Figure 1 shows both flat metal and round plastic springs 38 and 42 used in the same ~~in same~~ apparatus 10, it is foreseeable that only one type of spring 38 or 42 would be used, and such springs could be formed of various materials. In addition, the number of segments equipped with a positioning device 36 could vary. For example, Figure 6 shows an embodiment in which flat metal springs 38 are located along only about one-half of the circumference of a tube segment 16/20, such that the opening 40 through which the products drop is located along the wall of the segment 16/20. As a result, food products are urged into contact with the inner wall surface of the feed tube 14 as they drop, instead of being forced away from the wall surface and centered along the central axis of the tube 14.